



UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS

U. S. MARINE CORPS FORCES, CENTRAL COMMAND
7115 SOUTH BOUNDARY BOULEVARD
MACDILL AIR FORCE BASE, FLORIDA 33621-5101

MARCENTO 1700.1A
G-1

15 DEC 2008

COMUSMARCENT ORDER 1700.1A

From: Commander, U. S. Marine Corps Forces, Central Command
To: Distribution List

Subj: REQUEST MAST

Ref: (a) U. S. Navy Regulations
(b) Marine Corps Manual
(c) JAGMAN
(d) MCO 1700.23F
(e) MCO P5354.1D
(f) MCO P1900.16F

Encl: (1) Marine Corps Request Mast Application (NAVMC 11296)

1. Situation. The purpose of this order is to promulgate Request Mast policy and procedures for personnel under the Operational (OPCON) and Administrative (ADCON) control of Commander, Marine Corps Forces, Central Command.

2. Mission. Establish a Request Mast program in accordance with the references.

3. Execution.

a. Commander's Intent and Concept of Operations.

(1) Commander's Intent. Request Mast is the principle means for a Marine to formally communicate a grievance to, or seek assistance from, his or her commander. Request Mast provides a Marine the opportunity to communicate not only with his or her immediate commanding officer, but also with any superior commander in the chain of command up to and including the Marine's immediate Commanding General. This process does not include those outside the official chain of command, such as subordinate officers or staff noncommissioned officers. It is my intent to ensure that Marines at every level understand and are afforded their right to Request Mast. To be effective, Request Mast must have the wholehearted support of those to whom the leadership of Marines is entrusted.

(2) Concept of Operations.

(a) References (a) through (e) contain detailed background information concerning Request mast within the Naval Service and specifically the Marine Corps. The right of all Marines to directly communicate grievances to, or seek assistance from, the Commanding Officer is exercised through the formal process of Request Mast.

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Request Mast includes both the right of the Marine to communicate with the Commander, normally in person, and the requirement that the Commander consider the matter and personally respond to the Marine requesting mast. Request Mast also provides the Commanders with firsthand knowledge of morale, and general welfare of the command. Request Mast does not preclude the informal process of communication that occurs between seniors and subordinates.

(b) Marines requesting mast will be given an opportunity to resolve their Request Mast at each level of the chain of command. Listed below is the sequence in which a Marine will address his or her Request Mast in the chain of command.

1. Company Commander

2. Commander, MARCENT (this authority can be delegated to the Deputy Commander, MARCENT)

(c) Procedures

1. Requesting Mast with the Commanding Officer, Headquarters Company, Marine Corps Forces, Central Command.

a. Obtain a copy of the Request Mast Application NAVMC 11296 (Enclosures (1)), and fill out blocks 1 through 9. The application may be typed or handwritten.

b. Specifically name the Commanding Officer or Commanding General, in your chain of command, you wish to have resolve the Request Mast. Once a request has been made to Request Mast with the Commanding Officer, no one will make an attempt to delay the process.

c. For enlisted Marines, assistance in preparing the application can be obtained from the Company First Sergeant and Senior Enlisted Advisor. Officers may receive assistance from the Adjutant and Staff Secretary.

d. Submit your request through the chain of command.

2. Requesting Mast to the Commander, MARCENT.
Immediate commander shall adhere to paragraph (d) above before forwarding the Request Mast.

a. The Marine will prepare a complete written statement covering the reasons for requesting mast. Supporting documents, if any, will be attached to the statement. The statement may also include a list of witnesses with a summary of the expected testimony of each witness. The statement must include a summary of responsive action taken by each commander in the chain of command whom the Marine has communicated his or her problem.

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b. Each intermediate commander, to whom the Marine reveals the request Mast subject, will provide a written statement as to his or her understanding of the Request Mast subject and his or her responsive action. Each statement will be added to the Request Mast prior to the Marine communicating the Request Mast subject to the next Commander.

c. If the Marine has not yet revealed the subject of the Request Mast to the other Commanders in the chain of command, the Marine must include an explanatory statement. The Marine may place the Request Mast in an envelope marked "To be opened by the Commanding General only". The request Mast with endorsements will be forwarded to:

Commander
U. S. Marine Corps Forces, Central Command

d. When directed, the individual will report to the Staff Secretary for scheduling. A request to appear before the Commanding General is considered to have reached the Commanding General when the Request Mast is in the hands of the Staff Secretary.

e. The Commanding General may suspend the right of the Marine to apply Request Mast due to operational commitments, such as training or actual deployments. If any such suspension occurs, the reasons therefore shall be made known to all Marines whose rights may be affected.

3. Requesting Mast with the Commandant of the Marine Corps.

a. Although a Marine may be granted the privilege of forwarding an application for Request Mast to higher commanders above the immediate Commanding General, such as CMC or Secretary of the Navy, there is no vested right to Request Mast with such higher commander.

b. Any Commanding General in the chain of command between the Marine's immediate CG and CMC may establish such policies and procedures as they desire for processing Request Mast addressed to them, including that such requests may be returned without action.

c. Applications for Request Mast with CMC or SECNAV via CMC will only be considered by each commanding general in the chain of command if specifically recommended by the Commander, U. S. Marine Corps Forces, Central Command. Any application received at Headquarters Marine Corps that is not forwarded via the chain of command will be returned without action.

d. Request Mast applications to CMC will be handled by the Inspector General of the Marine Corps (IGMC).

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b. Tasks

(1) Company Commander

(a) Ensure all personnel are familiar with Request Mast policy and procedures.

(b) Ensure that all Request Masts are submitted in writing using enclosure (1), the Request Masts Application. Local reproduction of the application is authorized.

(c) Attempt to process and resolve the Marine's Request Mast issue, if revealed, without delay. If an issue has not been addressed to the Marine's satisfaction, forward the application to the next higher commander in the chain of command. At each level of command, the intermediate Commander shall attempt to resolve the Marine's Request Mast issue, if revealed, without delay. Whenever practical, there should be no more than one working day delay. Explanations for the delay must be provided to the Marine and forwarded via the chain of command. Statements, confidential or otherwise, will be forwarded with application to the next Commander, when applicable.

(d) Allow Marines to Request Mast in person unless extraordinary circumstances preclude such an appearance. If circumstances exist that make a personal appearance before the commander impractical, the commander will provide a written explanation of why a personal appearance was impractical.

(e) Follow-up to ensure that each Request Mast issue is resolved in a timely manner and no action, adverse or prejudicial to the interests of any Marine, results from the Marine's exercise of the right to Request Mast.

(f) In matters that cannot or should not be resolved, explain to the Marine why action will not be taken to resolve the grievance and advise the proper avenue to address the grievance if there is one.

(g) In matters that are beyond your authority to resolve, forward the Request Mast to the next higher Commander for consideration and appropriate action.

(h) Ensure that the records, proceedings, and final dispositions of Request Mast are properly safeguarded to prevent such information from having prejudicial effect on the Marine. Request Mast records shall be maintained separately from service records.

(i) Ensure compliance with applicable provisions of this order.

(j) Exercise those disciplinary or administrative options considered appropriate if a Marine commits or attempts to

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commit interference or reprisal against any Marine exercising his or her right to Request Mast.

c. Coordinating Instructions.

(1) A Marine applying for Request Mast in good faith may do so without fear of reprisal or prejudice to his or her interest.

(2) Request Mast should not be used for the purpose of harassment, avoiding duty, or intentionally interfering with commander's ability to carry out functions and mission of the command.

(3) If a Marine's Request Mast issue is not resolved to his or her satisfaction, that Marine will be afforded the opportunity to address the issue with the next higher commander.

(4) Once a Marine has indicated his or her desire to Request Mast with the Commander, NCOs, SNCOs and Officers subordinate to the Commanding Officer will make no effort to delay the Request Mast process in order to solve the problem themselves, but rather will focus their effort on making the Marine available to the Commander.

(5) Reference (f) states that Request Mast is the preferred method for submitting Equal Opportunity formal complaints of discrimination, to include sexual harassment and hazing.

(6) A Marine does not have to disclose the subject of the Request Mast to anyone in the chain of command except to the Commander with whom the Marine is requesting mast.

(7) A Commander may deny a Request Mast applications if there is another specific venue of redress available to the Marine. The Commanding Officer shall carefully examine each Request Mast to determine if other peripheral issues should be addressed; accordingly commanders may wish to hear the Marine's presentation of matters before making a decision to deny. The commanding officer shall explain to the appropriate agency, what procedures must be followed to resolve the issue. The authority to deny a Request Mast includes authority to refuse to further process the Request Mast. Whenever a Commander denies a Request Mast under his authority, he or she shall, within a reasonable time, forward a report of such action and the basis therefore to the immediate Commanding General via the chain of command. The following are some examples to which other avenues of redress apply:

(a) The Uniform Code of Military Justice (UCMJ) provides for the protection of the rights of a Marine at every stage of disciplinary action from investigation through final review or appeal. Therefore, a commander may deny a Request Mast that has as its subject such disciplinary action whether contemplated, pending, in progress, or final. Request Mast is not to be used as a means of collateral attack against the proceedings, punishment, or findings and sentence resulting from disciplinary action brought under the UCMJ.

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(b) Reference (f), chapters 4 and 6, contains provisions for the protection of rights of Marines being processed for involuntary administrative separation. Accordingly, Commanders may deny a Request Mast that as its subject such involuntary administrative discharge proceedings whether completed, pending, in progress, or final.

(c) Chapter III of reference (c) contains guidance for the preparation, submission, and processing of complaints under Article 138, UCMJ, and Article 1150 or reference (a). Commanders may deny a Request Mast if it's subject is an ongoing Article 138 or 1150 investigation. The staff judge advocate should be consulted in such instances.

(8) At the completion of Request Mast, the Marine Requesting Mast will make a written statement on the Request Mast application or attached sheet indicating that he or she has had the opportunity to communicate directly with the commander identified on their application and has been informed of any action to be taken by the commander conducting the Request Mast.

(9) If a Request Mast addressed to a higher commander is resolved at a lower level, the Marine will make a written statement on the Request Mast application or attached sheet indicating that he or she is satisfied with the action taken at the lower level and has chosen to voluntarily withdraw the Request Mast. The Marine and a witness will jointly sign this statement.

4. Administration and Logistics.

a. Nothing in this order is intended to expand or abridge the rights of Marines otherwise guaranteed by the First Amendment of the U. S. Constitution, Federal law or applicable. Department of Defense, Navy or other Marine Corps regulations. The exercise of such rights is not governed by the procedures contained in this order.

b. Per reference (d), any individual, including the Marine requesting mast, who impedes adherence to these procedures, may be subject to disciplinary action.

c. Any interference with a Marine's right to Request Mast or any attempt to reprisal against a Marine who has requested mast is prohibited. No Marine may suppress, or attempt to suppress another Marine from initiating, writing, or forwarding a Request Mast up the chain of command. Any violation, attempted violation, solicitation of another to violate this Order by interfering with a Marine's right to Request Mast, subjects involved members to disciplinary action under Article 02 of the UCMJ.

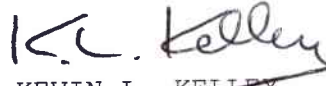
d. Pursuant to SECNAVINST 5212.5C, Request Mast records are to be retained for 2 years from the date of final action is taken. If resolved at a lower level, the CG of the Marine requesting mast will retain the Request Mast documentation. In cases the Marine has

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requested mast to the Commander, U. S. Marine Corps Forces, Central Command, the G1 will maintain.

5. Command and Signal.

- a. Signal. This Order is effective the date signed
- b. Command. This Order is applicable to the total force.


KEVIN L. KELLEY
Chief of Staff

MARINE CORPS REQUEST MAST APPLICATION
NAVMC 11296 (Rev. 6-97)
SN: 0000-00-888-0350 U/I: EA

PRIVACY ACT STATEMENT

Authority: Title 5, U.S. Code 301; Title 10, USC Section 5013

Principal Purpose: Formal filing of complaints/problems to command personnel.

Routine Uses: To provide a record to facilitate personnel management actions and decisions; to serve as a data source for complaint/problem information and resolution efforts.

Disclosure: Disclosure is voluntary. Failure to complete the requested items could result in delayed command action and/or inaccurate/incomplete analysis of the complaint/problem.

PART I: TO BE COMPLETED BY THE APPLICANT

1. NAME:

2. RANK:

3. SSN:

4. UNIT:

5. RACE/ETHNIC GROUP:

6. GENDER:

7. DATE:

8a. I desire to Request Mast with: (Provide the name and billet of the Commanding Officer with whom you desire to communicate.)

8b. NATURE OF COMPLAINT/PROBLEM: (Give in as much detail as possible the basis of your complaint; describe the incident(s)/behavior(s) and date(s) of the occurrence(s); the names of the individuals involved, witnesses and to whom it may have been previously reported. Include any other information relevant to your complaint/problem. Attach additional sheets, as needed.)

8c. REQUESTED REMEDY/OUTCOME: (Clearly state what assistance or complaint resolution you are seeking from the commanding officer name in 8a above.)

9. AFFIDAVIT

I, _____ have read this statement which begins in Block 8b on this page (page 1) and ends on page _____. I fully understand the statement made by me and certify statement is true. I have initiated all corrections. I make this formal statement without threat of punishment and without coercion, unlawful influence, or unlawful inducement.

(SIGNATURE OF APPLICANT DATE)

Encl (1)

PART 11: TO BE COMPLETED BY THE OFFICER CONDUCTING REQUEST MAST

10. DISPOSITION: (Provide a detailed explanation of actions taken or attempted to resolve the complaint/problem, to include any other referrals. If an inquiry/investigation was initiated as a result of this complaint, provide the type of conducted and the results. Attach additional sheets as necessary.)

COMMANDING OFFICER SIGNATURE DATE

Encl (1)

PART III: APPLICANT'S ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF REQUEST MAST

(Applicant should initial/complete the appropriate statement(s))

 I have had the opportunity to communicate directly with the Commanding Officer named in Block 8a and understand the disposition or probable disposition of my problem/complaint.

 I have had the opportunity to communicate directly with _____
(name and billet of commanding officer subordinate to officer named in block 8a), understand the disposition or probable disposition of my problem/complaint, and voluntarily withdraw this Request Mast.

 I have not had the opportunity to communicate with my Commanding Officer named in block 8a.

 I have had the opportunity to communicate with my Commanding Officer named in block 8a but have not been informed of the disposition or probable disposition of my problem/complaint.

WITNESS' SIGNATURE DATE

APPLICANT'S SIGNATURE DATE